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II. REMARKS

Claims 2, 7, 9, 12-15, 16, and 23 have been amended. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, and 11 have been cancelled. Accordingly, after entry of this amendment, claims 2-5, 7, 9, and 12-31 remain pending in the present application. Applicants request entry of this Amendment.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge indication by the Examiner of allowable subject matter in claims 7, 9, 12, 14, and 16-31. Accordingly, the Applicants have amended claims 7, 9, 12, and 14 to place these claims into independent form and to include all the limitation of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Rejections Under 35 USC §112

The Examiner rejected Claims 16-31 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Accordingly, the Applicants have amended independent claims 16 and 23 to correct the antecedent basis problem and respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

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Rejections Under 35 USC §102

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-6, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 15 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Krude et al. (U.S. Patent 6,193,419). The Applicants have amended dependant claims 7, 9, 12, and 14 to place these claims into independent form and to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1, 8, 10, and 11 have been cancelled and claims 13 and 15 have been amended to depend from claim 12. In light of the indication by the Examiner of allowable subject matter in claims 7, 9, 12, and 14, the Applicants assert that claims 7, 9, 12, and 14, as amended, are allowable over Krude et al. Further, the Applicants assert that claims 2-5, 13, and 15 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from one of the allowable independent claims 7, 9, 12, and 14. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 USC §102(b).

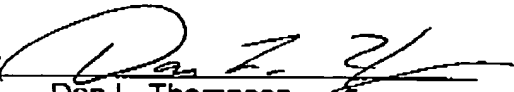
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Conclusion

The Applicants assert that pending Claims 10-16 are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant allowance of these claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
Dan L. Thompson
Registration No. 54,490
Attorney for Applicant

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. Box 10395
Chicago, IL 60610
Telephone: (734) 302-6000